

**Amendments to the Claims:**

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (currently amended) A shielding gas device for pressure die-casting machines, comprising:

a plurality of inlet nozzles, the inlet nozzles being configured to introduce a shielding gas mixture into a melting furnace;

a container, the container being configured to receive a mixture of individual shielding gas components from a plurality of gas sources; and

a metering device connected between the container and the inlet nozzles for metering of flow of the shielding gas mixture into the furnace,

wherein

the container is a pressure accumulator, and

the metering device is configured to maintain a shielding gas mixture operating pressure at the inlet nozzles which is equal to or less than a pressure in the container, while maintaining ~~remaining~~ the operating pressure high enough to atomize the shielding gas mixture downstream from the inlet nozzles.

2. (previously presented) The shielding gas device according to Claim 1, wherein the at least one metering device meters the shielding gas mixture continuously or discontinuously.

3. (previously presented) The shielding gas device according to Claim 1, wherein the inlet nozzles are distributed on the melting furnace in such a way that rapid and uniform distribution of the shielding gas mixture is achieved.

4. (previously presented) The shielding gas device according to Claim 3, wherein the inlet nozzles are placed on the melting furnace in such a way that gas flows towards leakage points from the furnace.

5. (currently amended) The shielding gas device according to Claim 3, the inlet nozzles are configured in such a way that they are protected from being wetted by a melted material in the furnace ~~the melt~~.

6. (previously presented) The shielding gas device according to Claim 1, wherein the operating pressure is adapted to the type of inlet nozzles.

7. (previously presented) The shielding gas device according to Claim 6, wherein the operating pressure is regulated and monitored, and a signal device is activated when deviations from a desired operating pressure are detected.

8. (previously presented) The shielding gas device according to Claim 6, wherein multiple metering devices for different furnace sections or for different furnaces are connected in parallel and are fed by the container.

9. (previously presented) The shielding gas device according to Claim 8, wherein each metering unit is provided with a device for adjusting a flow quantity of metered shielding gas mixture.

10. (previously presented) The shielding gas device according to Claim 9, wherein an operating mode sensor is associated with each metering unit for determining the metered quantity.

11. (previously presented) The shielding gas device according to Claim 6, wherein each metering unit is provided with a control logic system that receives the signals concerning the furnace status.

12. (previously presented) The shielding gas device according to Claim 1, further comprising a mixing device having a mixing chamber in which the gases forming the shielding gas mixture are combined under pressure, wherein the mixing device is upstream of the container.

13. (previously presented) The shielding gas device according to Claim 12, wherein pressure nozzles for supplying the gases to be mixed are provided on the mixing chamber.

14. (previously presented) The shielding gas device according to Claim 12, wherein pressure regulating devices are associated with the feed lines to the mixing chamber.

15. (previously presented) The shielding gas device according to Claim 13, further comprising a pressure regulating device for maintaining equal pressure among gas feed lines leading to the mixing chamber.

16. (previously presented) The shielding gas device according to Claim 13, further comprising a device for monitoring a pressure in a connecting line between the mixing chamber and the container.

17. (previously presented) The shielding gas device according to Claim 12, further comprising a gas analyzer associated with the mixing chamber by which the concentration of the gas mixture may be monitored.

18. (previously presented) The shielding gas device according to Claim 17, wherein the gas analyzer compares the concentration of the gas mixture in the mixing chamber to a reference mixture, and when there are deviations sends a signal to the mixing device.